





## Welcome to Write On, Door County

These lands that surround Write On were once forest, then logged, farmed, pastured, and now are a classic Door County old-fi ld on a slow, multi-patterned journey back to forest.

Th s guidebook is meant to introduce you to the story of these wild landscapes, and to an approach to help the Writing Center gracefully emerge from and connect to its natural setting.

The visitor or writer is welcomed with nearly transparent beginnings of trails and spaces that unfold from the Center. After that comes possibilities for individual discovery and revelation. Layers of history – successional change, emergence, decay, bustle and nibble – show themselves to anyone observant, whether moving or sitting still. Half-hidden details are open to interpretation – unexplained artifacts, unexpected sightings, partial glimpses, light and shadow around bends.

The process of integrating the Center with the land is a journey of ecological restoration, too. Getting to know the way nature works – and the way we all work to assist in healing the land – is a nurturing framework. We are all glad stewards in the next chapter of the well-being of this place.

The landscapes at Write On can be thought of in five parts. Near the Center, introductions take place. Plant friends appear in drifts, eckoning the explorer to what will be found in the other four parts: the meadow, the successional old-fi ld, the new woods, and the hardwood forest.

The path awaits.



### A Door County Meadow

Door County does not have fi e-dependent ecosystems, so true prairies do not develop. Our meadows are openings, created naturally by windfall, tree fall, exposed bedrock or happenstance of topography, or unnaturally because of past land use history, including timber cutting and agriculture.

These openings are the beginnings of a patterned successional process. Quintessential at Write On are bracken fern, yellow coreopsis and the petite pussy-toes, along with a joyous complement of familiar plant friends like several species of white, blue, lavender and violet asters; brown-eyed Susans and



thimbleweed; grasses and sedges. In places, there is a surprising amount of starry false Solomon's seal, with strawberries, bee balm and milkweed.

When old-fi ld junipers begin to arrive, a story is being written again in a familiar Door County pattern ...



Old-Field on a 100-Year Meander to Becoming Forest

The path through the old-fi ld is evident. Landscape architects use the term "legibility" to describe the degree of intuitive comfort one has in fi ding one's way in the landscape. Despite the complexity in an old-fi ld, the patterning and familiarity of junipers leads the way forward. That sea of old-fi ld junipers is an ecological facilitator, giving safe harbor to young upstart conifers and pioneer hardwoods, protecting them from nibbling mammals and too much drying sun. In Door County it can take one hundred years to transition from fi ld to young forest. A perceptive eye can still fi d remnant old-fi ld junipers in the forest, relics of past transitions.

Little bluestem grass glows in the sunnier openings. Underfoot is the wiry-bladed sedge *Carex eburnea* and the friendly path rush. White pine, cedar, aspens, and black cherry emerge from the junipers, drawing the eye upward. These are the early beginnings of the new forest.





### A New Woods Nipping at the Edges

In the old-fi ld, wildfl wers and grasses – yellow-hooked dyer's-weed, purple New England aster, needle grass, little bluestem – soak up sun in all the places they can. But the aspens and cherries have another plan. The earliest ones spring up through the junipers and make the fi st shade. While the aspens, birches, cherries and pines are growing (quickly! like early-successional trees do), some plants thrive in the transitional conditions, in the partial light. These include Pennsylvania sedge, zig-zag goldenrod and the eye-catching columbine. As the decaying leaves of the trees increase the soil's organic layer, long-dormant seeds

might germinate, recognizing that now is their time.



The aspen clones serve as guideposts, bringing coherence to the developing landscape that is still working out the details.



### Hardwood Forest: Canopy and Understory

The old forest canopy is dominated by beech, sugar maple, birch and oak, which consume and filter the light. Some trees with wide-spread branches arrived early to this forested spot and stayed. Others grew once the shade had developed.

Understory trees and shrubs like ironwood, chokecherry and leatherwood (slow-growing and a symbol of forest health) have evolved to optimize the scant light available below the canopy.

Forest forbs (fl wering plants) and grasses worked out an arrangement long ago. Spring ephemerals – like trillium, wild

leek, bellwort – emerge, fl wer, set seed and store their energy for the next year in thick roots before the overstory trees leaf out. All of this happens in an urgent explosion of growth and color during April and May. In summer, the species that can economize on light will catch your eye, like baneberry and sarsaparilla.



Hint of Orchard	
Prunus serotina	Black Cherry
Prunus americana	Wild Plum
Foreword to the Woods	•
Thuja occidentalis	White Cedar
Tsuga canadensis	Hemlock
Abies balsamea	Balsam Fir
Acer saccharum	Sugar Maple
Acer rubrum	Red Maple
Betula papyrifera	Paper Birch
Cornus alternifolia	Pagoda Dogwood
Carpinus caroliniana	Musclewood
Prunus virginiana	Chokecherry
Rhus aromatica	Fragrant Sumac
Cue New Forest Edge	
Populus tremuloides	Quaking Aspen
Rhus typhina	Staghorn Sumac
Pinus strobus	White Pine
Fancy on Arrival	

Juneberry

Pasture Rose Meadowsweet

Amelanchier x grandiflora

Rosa carolina

Spiraea alba







Sunny Meadows	
Anemone cylindrica	Thimbleweed
Anemone virginiana	Tall Thimbleweed
Anthoxanthum hirtum	Sweet Grass
Aquilegia canadensis	Wild Columbine
Asclepias syriaca	Common Milkweed
Asclepias verticillata	Whorled Milkweed
Bromus kalmii	Kalm's Brome
Coreopsis lanceolata	Coreopsis
Danthonia spicata	Poverty Oat Grass
Fragaria virginiana	Wild Strawberry
Juncus tenuis	Path Rush
Koeleria macrantha	Junegrass
Monarda fistulosa	Bee Balm
Pedicularis canadensis	Wood Betony
Pteridium aquilinum	Bracken Fern
Rudbeckia hirta	Black-eyed Susan
Rudbeckia triloba	Brown-eyed Susan
Schizachyrium scoparium	Little Bluestem
Solidago juncaea	Early Goldenrod
Solidago nemoralis	Dyer's-weed Goldenroo
Solidago rigida	Stiff Goldenrod
Stipa spartea	Porcupine Grass
Symphyotrichum ciliolatus	Heart-leaved Aster
Symphyotrichum laeve	Smooth Blue Aster
Symphyo. oolentangiensis	Sky-blue Aster

#### Shady Respite

Anemone virginiana
Carex blanda
Carex gracillima
Carex pensylvanica
Carex plantaginea
Carex radiata
Carex rosea
Dryopteris intermedia
Eurybia macrophylla
Mainthemum racemosum
Matteucia struthiopteris

Thimbleweed
Wood Sedge
Graceful Sedge
Pennsylvania Sedge
Plantain-leaved Sedge
Eastern Star Sedge
Rosy Sedge
Intermed. Wood Fern
Largeleaf Aster
Solomon's Plume
Ostrich Fern

### Re-planting at the Writing Center

To help visitors and writers meet this wild place, the re-planted landscapes around the Center are arranged to tell stories.

At left: ome of the plants used in restoration around the Center.

Sunny meadows were planted with drifts o create pattern and movement, emphasizing little bluestem grass, yellow coreopsis, bracken fern, brown-eyed Susan, bee balm. Most of the meadows were seeded and will take three or more years to establish. Over time, patterns will adjust to perfect their natural affiliations.

North of the building a shady respite allows details of small plants, many of them sedges, to delight the eye. Shade from the Center acts as a substitute for the shade of a large maple tree.

Near the road, a hint of orchard alludes to past homesteaders. A sweep of shrubs – fragrant sumac, chokecherry and meadowsweet – provides lovely color and structure year-round.

A bit of fanciness on arrival is offered by juneberry trees, our fi st species to bloom in spring before the leaves open, along with the pasture rose. These echo their appearance in the wild landscapes as occasional surprises.

The young woods on the west are introduced with aspens and staghorn sumacs closer to the Center. The sugar maples, birches, fi s, cedars, and hemlocks emerging from the old-fi ld in front of the Center hint at the hardwood forest to the east. And sometimes trees touch, just like in a mature forest.

### A Guide to Plants at Write On, Door County

The following pages introduce you to some of the plant friends you may encounter, welcoming your arrival and greeting you along your walk. They are arranged, here, from sunny meadow to forested habitats.



# Strawberry *Fragaria virginiana*

"When we look about us, we see the berries are still here, providing us with delicious foods. The leader of the berries is the strawberry, the fi st to ripen in the spring. Can we agree that we are grateful that the berries are with us in the world and send our thanksgiving, love, and respect to the berries? Now our minds are one." (Robin Wall Kimmerer, from Allegiance to Gratitude)



IllinoisWildfl wers.info

# Path Rush *Juncus tenuis*

Found on almost every trail



Common Milkweed *Asclepias syriaca* 

Unless otherwise noted, all photographs, text and artwork: © Landscapes of Place

Thi bleweed
Anemone cylindrica
Tall Thi bleweed
Anemone virginiana



Lady Bird Johnson Wildfl wer Center

Lance-leaved Coreopsis *Coreopsis lanceolata* 



Lady Bird Johnson Wildfl wer Center

Bee Balm *Monarda fistulosa* 





Whorled Milkweed *Asclepias verticillata* 



Black-eyed Susan *Rudbeckia hirta* 



Branched Conefl wer *Rudbeckia triloba* 

A favored late-fall bloom

## Little Bluestem Schizachyrium scoparium

There are two types of people in the world: those that love little bluestem and those that don't yet know little bluestem.

The leaf blades form flat-stemmed clusters of purple, pink and peach known for catching afternoon light. Seeds have glistening white hairs.



# Bracken Fern Pteridium aquilinum

Forms colonies mostly from rhizomes. The same ancient species is known worldwide. It is said to have "walked around the world."



#### Wood Betony Pedicularis canadensis

Emerging spring leaves are magenta!





Pussy Toes Antennaria neglecta

IllinoisWildfl wers.info



Smooth Blue Aster Symphyotrichum laeve

IllinoisWildfl wers.info



New England Aster Symphyotrichum novae-angliae

## Starry False Solomon's Seal Maianthemum stellatum

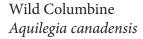
In Door County meadows, this plant tends to angle its leaves vertically to reduce evapotranspiration. When it grows in shadier areas, its leaves will reach out sideways.



## Curly-styled Wood Sedge *Carex rosea*



pheasantbranch.org, Flora of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy







Bristle-leaf Sedge *Carex eburnea* 



pheasantbranch.org, Flora of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy

Common Wood Sedge *Carex blanda* 





Northern Heart-leaved Aster Symphyotrichum ciliolatum

## Dyer's-weed Goldenrod Solidago nemoralis



IllinoisWildfl wers.info

Needle Grass Hesperostipa spartea



Lady Bird Johnson Wildfl wer Center





Daisy Fleabane Erigeron strigosus



Pasture Rose Rosa carolina



Fragrant Sumac *Rhus aromatica* 



New York Flora Atlas



Wild Plum Prunus americana

#### Juneberry, Serviceberry Amelanchier laevis

The berries taste great but you have to get them before the birds!





### Pagoda Dogwood Cornus alternifolia

A Pagoda Dogwood welcomes visitors at the front entrance to the Writing Center.



Forestryimages.org - Image Number 5473422 Rob Routledge, Sault College

## Chokecherry Prunus virginiana





Online Virtual Flora of Wisconsin. 2020. http://:wisfl\_ra.herbarium.wisc.edu

# Old-fi ld Juniper *Juniperus communis*

"Juniperus comes from the Latin meaning 'forever young' ... The Common [Old-fi ld] Juniper is the source of the berries (technically the cones) that are used to give gin its distinctive flavor." (Roy Lukes)



Buff loberry Shepherdia canadensis





Staghorn Sumac Rhus typhina

Icon of the edges

## American White Cedar *Thuja occidentalis*

"In a shaded and more agreeable situation, their boughs are multitwigged ... on branches which are spread in feathery, horizontal fans. But in [an] exposed situation the twigs, as if in self defense, have turned at right angles to the sun so that they are all presented edge-on rather than surface-on. They are arranged like slats in a Venetian blind, and for the same purpose ..." (Virginia Eifert, *Journeys in Green Places*)



Online Virtual Flora of Wisconsin. 2020. http://:wisfl ra.herbarium.wisc.edu

## White Pine *Pinus strobus*

Five letters in w-h-i-t-e, five needles in a cluster makes this an easy identification.



Lady Bird Johnson Wildfl wer Center

Virginia Creeper Parthenocissus quinquefolia

Offers glorious red colors in fall





Toothwort *Cardamine concatenata* 



Bellwort Uvularia grandifl ra



Trillium Trillium grandiflorum

Iconic spring ephemeral and possibly the fi st 'latin' plant name you learned

### Wood Violet Viola sororia



Downy Yellow Violet *Viola pubescens* 



Lady Bird Johnson Wildfl wer Center

Early Meadow Rue *Thalictrum dioicum* 

Filaments dangle like fringe





False Solomon's Seal Maianthemum racemosum



Pennsylvania Sedge *Carex pensylvanica* 



Wild Sarsaparilla *Aralia nudicaulis* 

White Baneberry, Doll's-eyes *Actaea pachypoda* 



Red Baneberry *Actaea rubra* 

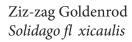


Large-leaved Aster Aster macrophyllus





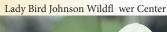
Lady Bird Johnson Wildfl wer Center



A woodland goldenrod with a stem that goes zig-zag



Wild Leek, Ramp *Allium tricoccum* 





Wood Anemone Anemone quinquefolia

# Quaking Aspen Populus tremuloides

"The slim trees were like golden plumes whose disk leaves shook incessantly in the wind and splashed a dazzling yellow against an October sky." (Virginia Eifert, *Journeys in Green Places*)



Lady Bird Johnson Wildfl wer Center

# Big-tooth Aspen Populus grandidentata



Online Virtual Flora of Wisconsin. 2020. http://:wisfl ra.herbarium.wisc.edu

## Black Cherry *Prunus serotina*





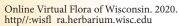
Lady Bird Johnson Wildfl wer Center

Nannyberry Viburnum lentago



Lady Bird Johnson Wildfl wer Center

Paper Birch Betula papyrifera





Balsam Fir *Abies balsamea* 

## Sugar Maple Acer saccharum

"Standing around us we see all the Trees. The Earth has many families of Trees who each have their own instructions and uses. Some provide shelter and shade, others fruit and beauty and many useful gifts. e Maple is the leader of the trees, to recognize its gifts of sugar when the People need it most. Many peoples of the world recognize a Tree as a symbol of peace and strength. With one mind we greet and thank the Tree life. Now our minds are one." (Robin Wall Kimmerer, from *Allegiance to Gratitude*)



Toothed leaf margins distinguish this readily from Sugar Maple



Missouri Botanical Garden



New York Flora Atlas

## Leatherwood *Dirca palustris*

An uncommon treat, with leathery twigs and beautiful May fl wers





New York Flora Atlas

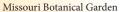
### Red Oak *Quercus rubra*

Really, it's an acorn tree.



Lady Bird Johnson Wildfl wer Center

Eastern Hemlock *Tsuga canadensis* 





American Beech Fagus grandifolia

Unless otherwise noted, all photographs, text and artwork: © Landscapes of Place v2 / 12 November 2020



